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ABSTRACT

The author depicts life styles and educational trends in 1950, 1976, and 2001, and urges educators to prepare children for life in the 21st century. The 1950s were characterized by soap operas, inexpensive food and gasoline, large families, and aspirations toward a good education and secure jobs. Schools expanded to accommodate the postwar baby boom. Innovation meant expanding college prep courses. In 1976, television offers instant sports replays and international news; pocket calculators are common; food and energy are mcre expensive; life expectancies are longer; and 51% of all mothers have joined the work force. Education has changed in response to management plans, conceptual learning, performance, competency, and cognitive and psychcmotor research. By 2001, students will be expected to know 5.6 times the volume of knowledge held by a graduate in 1950. The physical, cultural, and political environment will be different. Education will be the function of many groups, because learning will be seen as a continuous process with varied learning styles and stimuli. There will be personalized teaching, flexible scheduling, and training in creative survival skills. Educators of the 1970s must prepare students now to cope creatively with change. (AV)

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EDUCATION FOR THE YEAR 2000

By: George Andrusin

Tomorrow, the year 2001, is almost within our grasp. It is a short twenty-five years away. Permit me to stand here today, in 1976, and paint three scenes depicting the years 1950, 1976 and 2001. Those bitter-sweet years of our youth will be done in watercolors, a blending of soft, pastel-like tones in a romantic-impressionalistic style. The present will be done in oil exhibiting a bold, vivid, strong, realistic manner with bright contrasting colors. The third, 2001, will be a charcoal sketching of a proposed work - unfinished - untitled - and of a yet defined style.

First the watercolor - - -

In 1950 we were looking at the Heavens for flying saucers. The Kefauver Senate Crime Committee had introduced senate investigating committee procedures into our

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living rooms by way of the 10-inch or 12-inch Dumont T.V. screen. The year 1950 saw Liz Taylor's first marriage, the lucky groom was Nicky Hilton. We were all reading The Cardinal. It was the year when $10.00 bought more than two bags of groceries. Gas was selling for 19.9 cents a gallon. One dollar provided a young crew-cut Romeo with enough fuel to keep the family car running to the sock-hop, the malt shop and along the long scenic route to his girl's back door. It was the time he dreamed of owning a second-hand Hudson, De Soto or Studebaker. It was the time when every young girl dreamed of the Junior prom,a wrist corsage and, in North Jersey, a trip to Frank Daily's Meadowbrook.

1950 was the time for saddle shoes, team sweaters, calf-length skirts, the Henry J, Milton Berle and Captain Video. Soap operas were still on the radio with Ma Perkins, Helen Trent, Our Gal Sunday, and Portia Faces Life. TV was fairly new to the American home. The kids watched Howdy-Doody, Mom saw the Kraft Theatre while Fridays were reserved for Dad's viewing of the Friday Night Fights. One of our most difficult decisions concerned Saturday night resulting in the question, "Do we go out or do we stay home to

watch Sid Ceasar?" Of course, everyone stayed home Sunday to view Ed Sullivan.

Remember 1950 when farmers, ranchers, and workmen were the only people who wore Levi's. Pony tails always identified the female gender. Dancing was done cheek-to-cheek to the tune of Mona Lisa or I Can Dream, Can't I. Teresa Brewer sang a catchy tune entitled, Music, Music, Music. Everyone sang Goodnight Irene.

The youth of 1950 were concerned with living "The Great American Dream". Thoughts were directed towards military obligations, a good job or college. Many of us were convinced that the one method to transfer the dream into reality was to attend an institution of higher education. This dream seemed to be the white collar job, the cape cod house, the car, the "cheerleader"-type wife and the two children, a boy and a girl. Maybe for many this goal was an Ozzie and Harriet existence.

The schools were faced with a few problems. The post-war babies were instrumental in expanding enrollments, creating new wings, if not new buildings, enlarging staff and even completing football stadiums. New books were purchased to replace the old well-worn

texts. History books included World War II while the science books mentioned the atom. Innovation to many meant expanding the college prep courses. Innovation to others was the elimination of the mid-year kindergarten entrance and the January high school graduation. A few of us were brave enough to quote Earl C. Kelly - but problems of growth, space, and expansion were paramount.

Now the Oil Painting - - -

Our television sets are larger; 19 and 21-inch color sets are common. Instant replay is now an expected feature of all sports broadcasts. Any major event or crisis in any remote part of the world is almost instantly available for home viewing. The Watergate Hearings and the accompanied fallout have occupied some of our attention. We are reading Trinity and empathizing with Mary Hartman. Few are surprised that Elizabeth Taylor is on marriage number seven.

Willy Ley's predictions of manned space flight and moon landings have been realized. Princeton's Gerard K. O'Neill is now discussing the establishment of a space colony midway between the Earth and the Moon.

We now have mini-pocket calculators, tiny radios and micro-fische cards which contain twenty-thirty book

pages on a 4 x 6 card. We now worry about gas shortages, inflation, pollution and ecological balances.

Many of us do not shift when we drive. A lot of us love gadgets, consequently we collect them as if they were idols; the shrine, a kitchen cabinet counter top. A grocery bill of $10.00 may fill one shopping bag. Asking for a dollar's worth of gas produces a sneer from any service station attendant. Today, we are vaguely aware of the Third World. To some, it is one of those romantically, mysterious places where Humphrey Bogart and Katherine Hepburn met and fell in love.

We are also obsessed with techniques, hagridden by facts and in love with information. Dwight McDonald in his essay "The Triumph of Fact" states, "Our popular novelists must tell us about the historical and professional background of their puppets; our press lords make millions by giving us this day our daily fact; our scholars or more accurately, our research administrators . . . erect pyramids of data to cover the corpse of a stillborn idea; our way of "following" a sport is to amass an extraordinary amount of data about batting averages, past performances, yards gained, etc., so that many Americans who cannot read without moving their lips have a fund of sports scholarships that would

stagger Lord Action; our politicians are mostly former lawyers, a profession where the manipulation of facts is of first importance; we are brought up according to Spock, Gesell and other Aristotles of child care; we make love according to the best manuals of sexual techniques; and before we die we brief our wives with Donald I. Roger's "Teach Your Wife To Be A Widow."

The culture of today's youth is confused; time and experiences proceed with great speed. There is little time to ponder, think and reflect. Roots, tradition and geographic stability may be rare to many. It is increasingly more difficult to escape to a new frontier area. There are no frontiers. Radio and television can and do invade every remote area. Migration in time has replaced migration in space and geographical migration. Today's youth and today's young adults are building a new culture where the old still thrives. Generations ago they manifested their malcontent by moving. Today they change at home. Today's children are growing up in a world their elders never knew; but few adults knew that this would be so. The adults could not prepare the youth for the future. We have to realize no generation will ever experience what we have experienced. In this sense, we must

realize we have no descendents, as our children have no forebears.

Our common history and cultural base of education has been overwhelmed with a massive amount of stimuli. Paul Goodman, John Holt, Herbert Kohl, Jonathan Kozol, George Dennison, Charles Silberman, Jack Frymier, Arthur Combs, John Goodlad, Carl Rogers, B. F. Skinner, Jerome Brunner and Vincent Rogers are familiar names. We've all been exposed to the alphabet soup of education be it ITA, SMSG or SAPA. Management plans, systems, computers, strategies, mini-courses, and conceptual learning are terms within our vocabulary. We also know of the cognitive, psychomotor and affective domains. Not one of us escapes the annual battle of the budget.

Problems of performance, competency and production now seem to be paramount.

Let's pause for a moment and view both our watercolor and our oil painting. Permit me to make a few comparisons concerning the background of these pictures.

In 1950 about 26% of the mothers worked. Today, working mothers are represented by a 51% figure. The mid-century family could have expected to have a membership of three children. Today the typical family consists

of two adults and two children (1.76). A male child born in 1950 could expect to live until age 65 (65.7). Today's male infant may reach 68 years, (68.2) while the female infant can expect to realize age 75 (75.9). The median age was then 21 years, it is now 28.6 years. Cities with a million population have increased from 75 in number to 191. The labor force has increased. The work week is shrinking. Times have changed!

We just took a brief glance at our world . . . the world of our youth and the world of our present. As we move along in time, let us focus on the world of that our children may experience. Most certainly, it will be a world different from ours. The canvas is blank as we start sketching in charcoal lines. Some lines may become quite definite - - - others lightly drawn subject to modification and alteration.

May I look at the future through a student's eye? The youngster, I'll name him Brian, entered kindergarten in September. This was the first experience for this bright, cheerful, eager, five-year-old. In 1982, he will be an eleven-year-old sixth grader. The year, 1985, will find him entering his freshman year of high school. The joy of graduation will be experienced in 1988. A year later, Brian will be a

voting adult. By 1992, he will have gathered some credentials signifying the completion of an apprenticeship program, a training experience or an undergraduate education. That year he will be voting for a president. By the twenty-first century, Brian will probably be a mature, independent functioning adult with a major of his life ahead of him. Yes, our kindergarten child of today will live the major portion of his life in the next century experiencing joy, disappointment, success, frustration and love. The boy of today will be the man of the year 2000, 2010, 2020, 2030 . . . he will be the man of the next century.

What will our man of tomorrow need to know? What kind of knowledge will he have to possess? Perhaps we need to look at this thing called Knowledge. Back to 1950 - the volume of knowledge known to man at that time could be represented by the numeral 1. In 1965, this recorded data, information collection of theories and facts became a 2. By 1980 this volume of knowledge will be represented by 4. Brian at high school graduation will be faced with 5.6 times the volume of knowledge a graduate of 1950 was meeting head-on.

Since my question, "What will our man of tomorrow need to know?", the scholars of the world generated

1-2-3-4-5-6 pages of new, previously unknown information. Do we also continue, despite this limitless nature of knowledge, to think of schools as intellectual filling stations? Are the schools processing plants with the student considered hollow containers to be filled to capacity in a thirteen year assembly line routine? Do we stamp on each graduate's forehead this phrase, "This package has been filled to the top at the plant but transportation from school may have caused the contents to settle"? Do we still think minds are vast storehouses, barns or silos to be filled with a yearly harvest of information, facts or knowledge? When the storehouse is full do we then participate in a harvest festival - - - a feast, a ritual, called graduation? For the man of the year 2000, will we be saying, "Your storehouse is full, go, get out into the world!"? Maybe we need to re-think school/education.

What characteristics will the world of 2000 have? What physical and cultural environments will my man of tomorrow find surrounding him? Is he prepared for his environment? In 2000, New Jersey will have four million more people.

The United States will probably have a population of 350 million. The world population will probably

increase by 2.5 billion to 6.5 billion. Our birth rate will be lower while the life expectancy rate will be higher. The median age will probably be 40 years. This means there will be large numbers of 50, 60, 70 and 80-year-old citizens living in the United States. Over 8% of our population will be urban dwellers. With domestic oil resources depleted by 1977, solar nuclear sources of energy will heat our homes. The two-car family will be a fond memory. Mono-rails and other forms of transportation will be popular. Food and water will be less abundant. The end of affluence in our land will become a reality.

The family will probably be different. The home person role will be performed by either a male or female. More women will have careers. Neighborhoods, block areas, churches, libraries, and schools may be incorporated into a kind of extended nurturing family. The village culture and structure of the 1970 Southern and Eastern European village may be reinstututed here with American variations. Single-family dwellings may give way to high-rise village complexes which contain church, school, library and recreational facilities.

Politically, we may be relating more to global problems. The white Judeo-Christian population will

be sharing the world leadership roles with blacks, browns, and yellow-skinned people. Moslems, Buddists, Hindu and others will assume greater world political power. Political problems may be decided by world consensus. Smaller component segments of large political institutions will have greater independence and greater practical impact on the large body. Universal voting by means of a computerized phone set-up will be standard along with highly sophisticated, honest, mature, consensus procedures.

The schools will not be the sole educational institution. Learning, education and teaching will be the responsibility of many community groups. Schools as we know them, will be appreciably different. The school for/of the year 2000 may be represented by these statements of philosophy.

1. Learning is a continuous evolutionary process.
2. Learning is not confined to a place called school.
3. The teacher is a coordinator, a guide, a director, counsellor and friend.
4. Peers, community workers, other professionals, men, women, doctors, lawyers, Indian chiefs can provide learning experiences.
5. A multitude of learning styles and a multitude of stimuli - books, films, trips, and varied

experiences enhance learning.

6. An encouraging environment is conducive to learning.

7. The function of teaching is to bridge the gap between theory and reality to make concepts real to the learner.

8. There are no winners or losers in the educational process.

9. Human, nurturing individuals with positive self images should lead learning activities.

10. The optimum development of the student for a rich, full life will be of prime importance.

11. Education shall be directed toward the fullest development of human personality.

12. Education fosters the achievement of self-identity which results from self worth, self-respect and independence.

13. Concern is shown for the child as a human being, a human being undertaking the complex task of growing into their own individual future.

The methods of carrying through on these statements of philosophy are varied. These will probably include:

1. Personalized teaching with great concern for the individual style of the learner.

2. Multiple learning experiences offered through flexible scheduling, continuous progress and fluid groupings.

3. Interdisciplinary approach with a concern for establishing the interrelationship of various content fields.

4. Appreciation approach, fostering the identification with material and ideas, an empathy for the thought.

5. Active stimulation with learner planning, choice making, problem solving, and active answer seeking.

6. Training for reality with creative survival skills.

Education opportunities will take many organizational forms different from today's schools. These probably will include:

1. Different compulsory ages for schooling (8-14).

2. Several pre-school options - nursery school, weekly experiences, every other day experiences.

3. Alternate avenues of education with a K-12 comprehensive system just one option.

4. Neighborhood learning centers.

5. Never ending educational experiences with recycling experiences as one option.

6. Options for retraining and career changes at any age.

The curriculum will be broad, reflecting real needs. It would probably include divisions dealing with:

1. Communications Skills

2. Survival Skills

3. Mental and Physical Health

4. Cooperation Skills

5. Compassion

6. Dignity

7. Trust

8. Human Potential

9. Social Justice

10. Peace

11. Death

What kind of education do the first graders of today need for the year 2000? I hope the knowledge gained through active learning, positive experiences, and self-image building relationships will contribute to his development as a worthy human being. It should be the kind of education that produces creative people who are capable of doing new things: people who can create, invent, alter, adjust and function in the environment of the future. The education for tomorrow should have graduates who can cope with the 21st century. This education should offer a student the positive experiences that encourage him to truly identify with the future so that when it becomes his present, he can live a full and rewarding life.